



Wilson's Hospital School

One-to-One Staff-Student Interaction Policy

In Wilson's Hospital School, we seek to promote a caring and committed school community which will facilitate the education of our students and where each individual is valued as a unique human being. It is the policy of this school that one to one teaching and counselling is often in the best interest of the student. Where one-to one sessions occur, this will take place in an open environment i.e. staff member and pupil visible through a glass panelled door.

One-to-One Teaching

Provided that it is deemed appropriate and beneficial for the student concerned, one to one teaching may be provided

- Individual tuition within the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Department
- Individual care provided by Special Needs Assistants
- Individual Care provided by Matron
- Individual classes or catch-up classes provided by teachers
- Group sessions where only one student turns up
- Individual coaching as part of a sports or other extra-curricular activity
- Individual Instrumental Music lessons and Drama classes

All one-to-one classes take place in an open environment with a glass panelled door. The teacher, as a qualified professional, shall use their judgement on how best to arrange seating and work areas, but shall be cognisant of the dignity and integrity of the student involved. Some work carried out within the SEN or Matron Department may require a degree of extra privacy. In any situations where a student receives one to one tuition on an ongoing basis, the parents shall be advised of this arrangement and a copy of the timetable shall be given to the Principal.

One-to-One Situations

One to one situations can take place in various circumstances including:

- Immediate care of students presenting with an issue to the office
- Disciplinary procedures where a student is interviewed about an incident on their own
- Disciplinary sanctions where a student is isolated (eg internal suspension) or the only one involved (eg the only person in Detention that day)

All one-to-one meetings with students take place in an open environment with a glass panelled door.

One-to-One Counselling

Internal counselling within Wilson's Hospital School can happen in a number of ways. A concerted effort is made to encourage students to view ANY member of staff as available to talk to them and to serve as their "one good adult" if needs be.

Students can meet with:

- The Guidance Counsellor
- Chaplain and Members of YFC
- Year Heads and Form Tutors
- Any staff member at the request of the student

Within the terms of this policy, any staff member who provides a listening ear to students shall be referred to as a “counsellor” whereas a member of the Career Guidance Department shall be referred to as a “Guidance Counsellor”.

All counsellors will have sensible regard for the student’s beliefs and values. They will work in ways to promote the students’ personal autonomy, freedom of choice and self-direction. The counsellor shall record all individual meetings with students, detailing who they met on a one-to-one basis and, where appropriate, relevant notes regarding the sessions.

In meetings with students, counsellors should always be mindful of

- their role and explain the boundaries within the counsellor/student relationship
- their qualifications, areas of expertise and relevant limitations
- the nature of counselling activities involved and the reasons for undertaking them and the benefits to the student in the case of counselling
- the need to make a referral which may benefit the student where any presenting issue is beyond the counsellor’s current level of competency
- confidentiality in the counselling process teachers have a responsibility to inform students of the extent and limitations of confidentiality with respect to the School’s policies and safeguarding of the wellbeing of the student.
- the limits of confidentiality – when a student is at risk or when the law has, is, or could be, broken. Students should be informed of the limits of confidentiality where information about them may need to be shared. If issues of safety override those of confidentiality and a concern arises the concern will be discussed with the Year Head of Principal as a matter of urgency.
- In particular, the staff member should be aware of their role as a Mandated Person under the terms of the Children’s First Act 2015 and Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017. Any concerns (Child Protection) that the counsellor has regarding the safety of a student is discussed with the Principal (DLP) as a matter of urgency. If the principal is unavailable, the issue will be discussed with the Deputy Principal (DDLDP)
- the students right to engage in and withdraw from involvement in the process at any stage
- keeping, and ensuring the security of, appropriate written records. All written records are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the School Office and/or recorded on School online reporting system (VShare). When making or keeping records, care should be taken to distinguish between fact, observation and opinion and, to include only such information as is required for the purpose of professional involvement with the student. Where a decision is made, the basis for the decision is noted. Statutory and Data Protection responsibility with regard to records applies to all media, whether written hardcopy, electronic or digitally recorded.

The Career Guidance Dept

Wilson's Hospital School has 0.7 allocation for a Guidance Counsellor. The Guidance Counsellor is fully qualified and is a member of the Teaching Council of Ireland and Garda Vetted. The Guidance Counsellor is also a full member of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) and typically attend five sessions of Supervision through the IGC in each academic year.

Frequent one-to-one career advisory meetings with students will take place as well as support and counselling for personal issues as required.

External Agencies

From time to time outside professionals may be required to meet with/assess students in a one to one setting and the School will facilitate this. This includes visits from agencies such as NCSE, NEPS, SEC, TUSLA etc. All personnel working with children on a one to one basis must be Garda Vetted.

Approved by the School Management Board on 15th September 2020